

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8620

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 02869

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, IN

SUBJECT: ANNUAL BRITISH-INDIAN CONSULTATION

1. ANNUAL TALKS BETWEEN BRITISH AND INDIAN FOREIGN OFFICES ARE SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN NEW DELHI MARCH 6 TO 10. BRITISH WILL SEND THEIR TOP ASIAN OFFICIAL, DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY MICHAEL WILFORD, ACCOMPANIED BY OFFICER IN CHARGE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, LUCY DEES. THEY EXPECT TALKS TO REVIEW WHOLE RANGE OF BILATERAL AND WORLD PROBLEMS, BUT BRITISH HAVE NOTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND.

2. HOWEVER, BRITISH SUSPECT INDIANS MIGHT WISH TO CONCENTRATE A GREAT DEAL ON NUCLEAR MATTERS. IN ORDER TO AVOID HAVING DISCUSSION MONOPOLIZED BY SUCH QUESTIONS, FCO WILL SEND ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY JOHN THOMSON TO NEW DELHI THREE DAYS BEFORE TALKS BEGIN. HE WILL DISCUSS BRITISH IDEAS ON NPT, INDIAN COOPERATION IN IAEA, AND SIMILAR MATTERS COMING UP IN THIS FIELD IN GENEVA AND ELSEWHERE. BRITISH HOPE TO LOWER THE TEMPERATURE ON SUCH AFFAIRS BY THE TIME THE MAIN TALKS BEGIN.

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3. CHALMERS SAID BRITISH HAVE BEEN "GETTING A LOT OF STICK" FROM INDIANS IN REGARD TO DIEGO GARCIA RECENTLY.

INDIANS ALSO SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT US WANTS A BASE ON GAN ISLAND WHEN BRITISH LEAVE IT. BRITISH HAVE TOLD INDIANS THAT THEY INTEND TO HOLD ON TO THEIR AGREEMENT (WHICH RUNS UNTIL 1986) AND THAT INDIANS ARE EXPRESSING THE SAME WORRIES EXPRESSED BY OTHERS SUCH AS THE PAKISTANIS, FRENCH, AND AMERICANS THEMSELVES. NONE OF THESE COUNTRIES WANTS GAN TAKEN OVER BY ONE OF THE OTHERS.

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